

# POEMS

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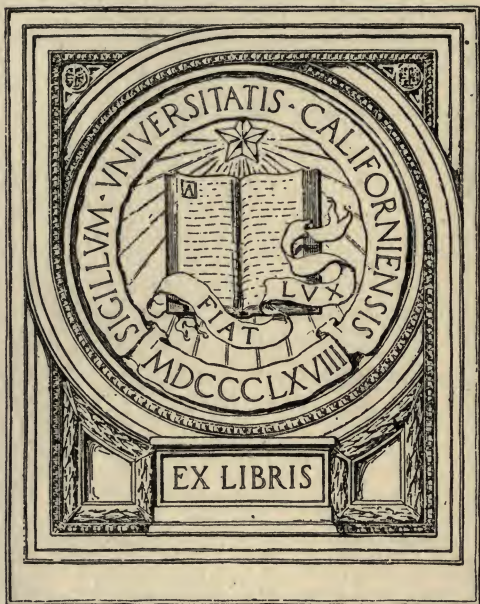
GERDA DALLIBA

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## POEMS



# POEMS

*By*

GERDA DALLIBA

*With An Introduction by*

EDWIN MARKHAM



NEW YORK  
DUFFIELD AND COMPANY  
1921

English Alumnus

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To

LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON

*One of the Noble Women who influence the Letters and  
Verse of New England, This Book is  
Gratefully Dedicated.*

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## A WORD OF INTRODUCTION

**H**ERE is a book that seems to me to have touches of the wild beauty which is the thing created by poetic genius. The strict craftsman will perhaps find blemishes and obscurities in the structure of these poems; but he will also find those rarities of thought and feeling that will be a delight. There is a rift of genius in this ledge of song; and genius is so rare and precious a thing that, wherever found, it should call out gratitude and not grumbling.

The following sonnet shows the unusual quality that tinges all of the work of Gerda Dalliba:

I would be some vast, dead, gold sonneteer  
Who heralds forth the crocus and the rose;  
Or down the high mid-passage of the year  
Blows blasts for empires that seek repose;  
Or with the fall my latest period close;  
Or as Apollo with gigantic cheer;  
Or sadly hymn of death by blighting foes;  
Or tell how last sun's rays shall disappear.

But all the time, my verse goes out to seek  
Rivers that gently wander through the plains;  
And with sleek winds sing the disturbless trees,  
With accidental butterflies full meek,  
*Whose wing before the least of purpose wanes,*  
Or but go humming with the summer bees.

Here is the sextet of another sonnet—a mystic cry of the heart:

## A WORD OF INTRODUCTION

Yet, sometimes in the syllabance of night  
I catch an echo that is not mine own—  
A parched long cry from some forgotten pain.  
Hush! it may be my heart's voice void of tone,  
Or a mute whisper from a life of light  
Led in the past, that may not come again!

This quatrain from another sonnet whispers of  
the old mystery of our fate:

Who threw the dust into the blind one's eyes?  
*Was it the sandwoman near the shoals of Time*  
*From her gray bag, that held with must and grime*  
*The grains' compassion and the grim surmise?*

We find a memorable *naïveté* and wildness in the  
lines "To a Child":

O tender one, not ready yet to climb  
The ways of chance, scarcely so strong to creep.  
Life's consequence in death and greater sleep  
Flaunt all the angels with their clumsy wings.  
Take for thy rattle earth and all its bells;  
*Chew on the world, and for thy rubber rings*  
*Have thou the endless heavens and their hells!*  
Take for thy playfellow a piece of space,  
And let man, as thy elder brother, run  
Playing for thee his game of tag and race  
With thy rebounding ball, which is the sun!

These lines might have been written by Shake-  
speare's child:

Thy hapless eyes,  
Happy in their imprintment of thy dreams;  
*Thy brow the whitened beach for thought's loose tide;*  
Thy cheeks a moor of berries, brown and red.



## A WORD OF INTRODUCTION

The bigness of Gerda Dalliba's concepts (sometimes dim in their outline) may be seen in her tumultuous poem, "The Gulf Stream." She cries to the ocean:

O sea!

Thou dost reach like a serpent, and bury the swan necks of  
Peninsulas, where  
The Isthmuses lie in thy lair.

The wide sympathies and affections of the poet come welling up in her last poem in the volume—the poem in memory of Grieg. There is a wildness in these sobbing chords:

To-night the violins around the world,  
Played on by hands that seek to find joy's key,  
Are touched with sadness down the four long strings.  
Known or unknown there comes the wail of wings:  
The resting bows unrosined send a plea. . . .

If the fastidious reader thinks that there is scarce a page of the book without verbal faults, let me cheer him with the fact that there is scarce a page without its fresh phrases, its striking figures. Here are a few felicities from her fancy:

How far is Heaven on a day in spring?

I hear a trumpet call across the sea,  
A gray sound-lily breaking on a lea.

The oriole swings above a grave  
And chirps as willingly above a cross,  
As if young lovers plighted.

## A WORD OF INTRODUCTION

The bee  
That now for ever hums,  
Its gold feet set in Heaven's cups of chance,  
Its wings adrift in unseen air, like drums  
Beating some unheard rhythm, small and free.

Thy name is Struggle! morn and noon and late  
Thou castest thy dim will from void to void.  
And in thy giant arm the little world  
Nestles to thee in littleness and grief.

The lines I have quoted show the wild energy of this poet's work. But even better work will yet come from the pen of this brilliant woman; for she has imagination, color, fire—and youth!

EDWIN MARKHAM.

NEW YORK CITY, 1908

## A WORD MORE

Gerda Dalliba walks no more below these skies; she died near the Mediterranean in 1913. After fourteen years I am again reading her book of poems, poems that came with a gesture of youth and beauty gallantly hailing the young century. I still think it one of the most remarkable of the modern volumes from a young pen, both in its large sweeps and in its limitations. Sometimes her reach exceeded her girlish grasp. She saw things in a large way, from high ground, but occasional obscurities sprang from her impatience to be off on new adventures of the spirit. So we find in the poems flashes of empyrean fire, also chasms of darkness. Her genius was volcanic, and smoke mixes with the ascending flame.

To revive the name of this young poet, too early dead, the mother, Mrs. Kate Dalliba-John (herself a gifted writer) has gathered this collection of her daughter's shorter poems. As I read again these strange rhymes and rhapsodies, Gerda emerges from the past a striking personality. She was a beautiful and ardent being, always more at home in the Unseen than in this visible drama of days. Many of her poems have a peering mystic quality, for she was ever seeking for meanings and waiting for revelations. She quivered before the wonder of life, vibrated to the appeal of music, responded to the touch of beauty;

## A WORD MORE

and with all this she was alive to the passion of kindness and poured out her aid and comfort to every noble cause. Love and memories follow her into the Next Chamber of the Mystery.

EDWIN MARKHAM.

WEST NEW BRIGHTON, NEW YORK,  
January, 1922.

## SHORT FLIGHTS





## SOME MUSIC

BEFORE thy music I, a lotus, lie,  
A flower enchanted by the spell of tone;  
And when I seek for thee, and am alone,  
It seems to wake such music I must die.  
Then, seeking this accord, each note I try  
That rests in human need with minors strown;  
And now I hear a mirth and now a moan,  
From echoing caves that join the sea and sky!

## THE HEART'S HUNGER

THE heart breeds hunger from rejected bliss,  
In the strange lines of a forgotten face,  
Or touch upon the brow of lips that trace  
The perfect circle of a lover's kiss:  
Or from remembrance, which distills in this  
Small climbing Earth the anguish of a race,  
Leashed in each frail mind's tortuous embrace,  
Knit to each young soul's waiting chrysalis!



## THE STARS

THE young night rides above in regal state;  
Behind her car the pageant of the shades,  
The while the clouds float into skyey glades  
Beyond the portal of the heaven's gate.

Peace to the copses of the jungle trees:  
Rest to the rivers that the oceans call!  
O'er slumbrous mountains of the centuries  
The dimness of the laden shadows fall.  
The stars bear forth their scroll of mysteries,  
Spelling a Dragon and a Dream to all!

## MY KAKEMONO

THE Kakemono in my house of light  
Is of thyself beloved. Day by day,  
I change its lustrous beauty—night by night  
I cast the picture for a new away!  
So thou dost grow exalted in my sight—  
From resonant gold, to lavish gold and gray!

## IF

OH, it were wonderful if youth were wise,  
And it were beautiful if one might see  
Innocence running from the mortal land  
Out to the hindered boundaries of the skies.

## TOGETHER

I HEARD from out the wind-swept harmony  
Of being, this tumultuous trombant cry,  
“We two shall live forever, you and I,  
Treading the cosmic paths of the to-be!”  
The clouds of evening hurtle o’er the lea,  
The dual essences of nature ply  
With rhythmic pulses; sequently they die.  
And this will be the fate for you and me.

## BESIDE VESUVIUS

By pool in Sicily a young boy sate,  
Singing the morning out as if 'twere Fate.  
He still sings on, in hidden Sicily,  
And pipes the world in his delirious verse,  
While all the lands run sinking to the sea  
To hide the loadstone of the universe,  
And makes disaster fall in melody:  
He pipes of giant stars that bear the curse!

## THE SELFLESS LIFE

It is the seeker for the things beyond  
Who garnishes his kingdom with best pelf:  
He has forgotten how it was to rest,  
And in his long, all-giving ways has found  
An abnegation for his urge of self  
Which is of all creative goods the best.

## THOUGHTS

O how much frailer than my thoughts am I  
That they can measure me a kingdom vast  
Outside my being and above the sky,  
Bounded by no futurity or past,  
To oceans where they must return to die  
Bravely as rivers homing from the vast!

## YEARNING

THE mountains hang about me, as the thoughts  
Which keep my body from thee, dearest love;  
How far they reach to Heaven! God above—  
They reach, and reach; and then they seem to climb  
As if their highest peaks were arms; I know  
'Tis best I stay from thee, and yet not so!



## THE QUAIN'T HEART OF THE NIGHTINGALE

THE quaint heart of the nightingale!  
He knows not, mad, unconscious bird,  
The poets dare not sing of him  
For fear their songs be callèd trite!  
But on a fresh first summer night  
(The memory of Eden, heard  
Above the earth, below the clouds)  
He wakes the ghost of hearts, whose shrouds  
Are pale as the moon's vapors—pale. . . .  
The quaint heart of the nightingale!

## ETERNAL CHANGE

COLD are the ashes of Cæsar,  
And Cleopatra's fame  
Is only the woof that tangles  
The ghost of her lovely name.  
The roots are waiting the branches,  
And the faint troublous star of dawn  
Will see that we, like the ages,  
Are bidden to begone.

## THE WHIRLING ATOM

A WHIRLING atom, through the will of space  
Circled in nebule in wild fate's embrace,  
Came past the will of stars and time and change,  
Looked on the ocean and the lands that range  
The comet worlds above, and far and wide,  
The alienation of great Heaven's tide—  
Sank—and became a face.  
It wore a veil so barren and so thin,  
That some who saw, saw not that there within  
The human was, till from the dark came sin—  
Stole in the eyes, as light in starless skies,  
Dropped on the mouth—then this strange face did win  
Again its impulse, whirled and whirled away.

## A DAWN SONG

THE Dawn is up, she wakes the birds!  
The fairest dawn I ever knew.  
She does not wait for passionate words,  
For her small creatures sing to you!

The Dawn is up—the fragrant herds  
Of flowers drink the morn stream's dew.  
She does not need to wake the birds:  
Her silent blossoms sing to you!

## SONNETS



## AN ASPIRATION

I WOULD be some vast, dead, gold sonneteer  
Who heralds forth the crocus and the rose;  
Or down the high mid-passage of the year  
Blow blasts for empires that seek repose;  
Or with the fall my latest period close;  
Or as Apollo with gigantic cheer,  
Hymn solemnly of death by blighting foes;  
Or tell how the last sun shall disappear.

But all the time, my verse goes out to seek  
Rivers that gently wander through the plains—  
Or with the winds sing through disturbless trees,  
With accidental butterflies full meek,  
Whose wing before the least of purpose wanes;  
Or go adventuring with summer bees!

## THE WOMAN OF HEAVEN

THE sky is as a woman's purple veil:  
Doth it inclose a harlot or a nun?  
What is the face, that ever must be pale  
Beyond the fretted risings of the sun?  
Now dripping fires through man's wild fingers run—  
The strands that ravel, as the faint clouds sail  
While winds remesh and tangle o'er the One  
Colossal Entity, unchanging, frail!

Mother of men, beatitude serene!  
Watch this behind thy vail of violet light—  
Mother of blooms that grow contentedly,  
Or clouds repured and conquerable night.  
We crush each other in our haste to Thee:  
Bend for our hearts thine omnipresent Screen!



## THE DREAM GARDEN

WITHIN a beauteous dream, serene and whole,  
Has grown a wonder garden, where I may  
Wander at my desire, or dance in play  
With grass that needs no ritual to control.  
No thing there led me, save an oriole  
Whose passionate song leapt forth to lead the way;  
And there awoke for me in willful sway  
Some lovely blossoms, waiting for my soul.

There one night, bending 'neath the sunset, I  
Within the cool of evening would have hurled  
Wild seed within the sod of this still place;  
Till looking in a pool's mysterious sky,  
I rose in horror seeing in it the world  
And the deep lines of passion on my face!

## SLEEP

O SLEEP, who bears me nearer to your heart  
When falling eyelids path the darkening deep,  
To lead me to the vistas, where the steep  
Elysium blindness falleth, and thou art!  
From out your lips no plaintive echoes start,  
No dire Earth there her miseries can weep;  
Nor on your bosom, O exalted Sleep,  
Can care take harbor, nor your amour part!

If you cannot eternal mistress be,  
Then portion well my visits to your dome—  
Your high-locked chamber wrought of ivory,  
Where low Circean winds lead those who roam.  
Your hands hold ever to us the unseen key,  
Dreamers of clay, who call your bosom home.

## THE CEASELESS CLIMB

O WAR of nature, leading to bright cause,  
To some glad haven in the desert set—  
Playing with light between the Sphinx's paws,  
Immutable, intangible as yet.  
Have thou a mercy on each soul; forget  
They come all burdened with their broken laws.  
They wear thy bounty; with an urgesome fret  
They shall outspeed thee on thy course, nor pause!

I climb and climb and never am forspent,  
Though hidden 'neath the hight I seek to win,  
Like glacier stream below a mountain peak;  
For some still echo calls me from within,  
As if the wind upon my instrument  
Struck strings to music. Still the hights I seek!

## DISILLUSIONMENT

How glad to sink in sunset like a prayer,  
Being but hope of truth, which was deferred—  
To hear the grasses murmur, "Ah, not there!"  
And the god mumble o'er his human word—  
To feel the poppies' kisses in my hair,  
And hear the sod's deep pulses never heard,  
Laying my ear beneath the rapturous air,  
My breast for lovers who are never stirred!

Down, into silent Death—to waiting Death!  
Tearful with eyes that longer need no tears,  
Counting the futile pulses of the breath,  
As the gulls seek the sea down scattered years;  
While over all one brooding spirit saith:  
"Down—down, like vapors to your moveless biers."

## UNSELFISHNESS

ONLY it is when we reject the heed  
Of our own beauty, or our claim on it,  
That Earth to us will open up her creed:  
Then from her beauty words of ancient writ  
Are spelled upon our vision to befit  
In effluence the tender of her gleed—  
As if our strata held the soul's Sanskrit,  
The Yajur Veda, for the world of need.

Therefore, in gardens of the lovely earth,  
And the foam gardens of the outer seas,  
Let us in pleasure wander, hand in hand,  
Taking the joy which was our own at birth—  
We later creatures of a lesser ease—  
Till there shall run a rapture through the land!

## TYRANNY

As long as thou shalt drink life from the skies,  
With slow, belated hands of happy love  
I hold up Heaven, knowing it were wise  
To drop the chalice lowered from above,  
And mark the splintered heap. For in this chance  
Flashes of truth might light my being thrice;  
Till, breaking from the fetters of my trance,  
I spurn the falsehood of your paradise.

Yet, day and night, as still my fingers clutch  
The heavy weight carried above my head,  
You blind with sleep my unaccomplished will;  
And, torturing me with your demanding touch,  
Foil my endeavor, till I turn instead  
And let you work your magic on me still.

## VIDHATA

VIDHATA wrote upon thy broad clear brow  
(Who keeps me from thee in the fate of men)  
With palm leaf, and a snake skin, and a pen,  
Given upon the night of Brahma's vow.  
And though I should encompass thee, and bow  
Before thee as a reed—and although when  
I sorrow I am thine—our commune then  
Was ended if the longing haunts me now.

Some hold that human life was made of dust,  
And some combine with dust our will as air  
Most alienably lost in quest of soul.  
I am a Hindoo, though I pray no prayer  
To any imaged Buddha, nor have trust  
That aught infolds me save my life's control.

## DEAD DAY

DEAD Day, why hast thou sunk within the west?  
Arise again that I may see thy face!  
If only thy ghost come unto me to grace  
My habitation and to make it blest.  
Die not! Thou child of fortune lulled to rest  
Within the twilight's eveningtide embrace—  
Upon the breast of Heaven's outspread space:  
O thou, who knew my suffering the best!

Dead Day! why hast thou died upon the lea?  
Upon the waters do I watch thy pall.  
The evening wind arises, calling thee;  
And unto thee the shrouded streams make call,  
While darkening mists obscure the voiceless sea.  
But thou? Dead Day, thou art to me my all!



## EARTH AND BEYOND

SMALL is the earth that roundly spheres for souls  
The young white crescent of her perfect moon;  
And trumpeting forth faint music from lost goals,  
Pauses to hush them in her afternoon,  
That none may know the way that she unrolls  
The silent night where comfort is unborn;  
But on the waiting earth again enscrolls  
The question lying in the birth of morn.

Behind the veil, each tear is filled with joy;  
And on the breast of Mother Certitude  
Lies Rapture sleeping as a slumberous boy:  
There is no sound to break the solitude,  
Save Gabriel's trumpet in its own employ  
Calling the vagrant souls from hill and wood!

## LISTENING

DEAR Love, I seem as ever at some brink,  
Waiting for the lost transport of thy word  
To bear me on—but question as I think  
That this is not for me—but the unheard  
That sings around each breast as if a bird:  
It says me well, that I must rise or sink,  
Steadfast, alone, so conquered and averred  
The doom of longing for the hope I drink.

Yet, sometimes in the syllibance of night,  
I catch an echo that is not mine own,  
A parched long cry from some forgotten pain.  
Hush! it may be my heart's voice void of tone,  
Or a mute whisper from a life of light  
Led in the past, that may not come again!

## COMPLEX LIFE

UNDERNEATH each mind lie slumberous pools  
Of lives forgotten and of hopes forsworn.  
In quietness we wake unto the morn;  
But, as we know, the ocean's grave-sand rules,  
Lying afar below the rounding sky.  
So, lying far below our happiness,  
Or our despair, the sunken pools confess  
A mirror of ourselves beyond our eye.

If one might go beneath the crimson heart  
He lives right royal with, in sovereignty—  
The great display of nature—he would start  
At miraged shadows hungering to be free.  
O Life, between All-Time and time, thou art  
Only the surface of this mystery!

## A PALACE UPON SANDS

I MIGHT have built a palace upon sands  
But I remembered its futility,  
For all the winter billows of the sea  
Would rise to wreck the structure of my hands.  
Then drew strange, sane men round, "He under-  
stands,"  
They said, "the laws of mutability."  
I listened, but Regret walked on with me  
As I went wandering over alien lands.

My unbuilt walls arose before my mind,  
And parapets and chimneys built to blast,  
And loosened gables swinging to the wind,  
Frail phantom windows to the hill-waves cast.  
O thou sad wisdom of the heart unkind,  
What might have been mine own within the past!

## FUTILE TIME

ONCE I began to sorrow with the sun  
And it was sunken; with night—then was risen  
Dawn in the cornfields, apple-cheeked a-mizzen;  
And noon eclipt her bounty while begun.  
Life thou art jesting! While thy fair feet run  
Across the shadows which the lights bedizzen,  
Lo, on thy fairness falls the wan and wizzen:  
Even with thy youth, thine age already won!

O Time, what wilt thou with these perishings?  
Wilt thou not in thy changure sip my grief?  
Noon, and midnight, thou hast stilled these feet:  
Thou wilt not harbor Love's sweet cherishings:  
After the glad leaf comes the sorry leaf.  
Oh, give us joy! Thou canst not, thou art fleet!

## YOUR FACE

ONE reaper comes who says to me and thee,  
"The moon is dead, the sun is yet to die."  
And I, who most have watched upon a sea  
Of longing, marvel not that such as I  
Who have no nether harvest fields to try  
With scythe nor any strained cup for the the bee,  
Where latest life of summer left the sky—  
Should be recalled by death to pass thee by.

But should I turn from hierarchical bliss  
To watch thy face a little and thy smile,  
Turn shining on me, as when earth makes shine  
In young sidereal morning; and for this  
The sun shall carry me across his isle—  
Not dead, but human toucht with the divine.

## DELIRIUM

WHO threw the dust into the blind one's eyes?  
Was it the Sandwoman near the shoals of Time  
From her gray bag, that held, with must and grime,  
Grains of compassion and a grim surmise?  
Oh, I am lonely underneath the skies!  
Strange I am held in this low pantomime.  
I mock the ocean as I strive to climb,  
And the waves leave me barren and unwise!

I, too, am blind—inexorably blind—  
I hear death voices that are calling me:  
I hear the dropping of the many tears.  
Shall I regret what I have left behind?  
No, I shall soar above mortality,  
Above the losses of these pitiless years.

## THY MEMORY

THY memory is like a garden cool,  
Where winds of night their grave siestas take.  
There let me lie upon a lucid pool  
As a closed pond-lily on a lonely lake.  
My heart was hot with love thou couldst not slake,  
And now has gone from out thy realm and rule;  
Nor with thy bosom's breathing will it wake,  
Leaving a shape behind that thou canst fool.

More hushed am I than if I should be dead,  
Parted from thee, who hast my shadow kept.  
Let green trees of thy garden sing it well;  
Allow the bright flowers still to wreath its head;  
Permit the rain to touch it, sweet rain wept  
From Heaven's own heart for all whereon it fell!



## A SKULL

A MUTABILITY my hand doth hold,  
For in my fingers as I press it tight  
It drops a little dust, as if not quite  
It were contented with its shape or mold;  
For what has change is neither young nor old,  
Though drifting centuries may there unite  
To parent it to birth. Touch, motion, light,  
Torture and sever—eternalize and hold.

Oh, 'tis a native moment for my soul!—  
This skull as near me as myself may be,  
A tabernacle it has used before,  
Bleached in the sun, where endless suns must roll  
To endless sunsets on a tideless sea.  
Hush: Lest it be reincarnate once more!

## LIFE'S FEAST

IF Life shall still invite me to her feast  
I shall not prove myself a morbid guest,  
Although in traveling from the innocent east  
Unto the far and sun-beridden west,  
My spirit may have dreamt its course oppressed.  
I laugh, and kiss at last the revel beast—  
The wines from ancient moldering vineyards pressed,  
The rapturous fruit, where even growth has ceased.

For was I called here only to be pained?  
And was my heart renailed upon the cross  
For this?—that even ere my life had waned  
My red lips should taste only a bitter loss;  
While miser Caution sits above the board,  
Eying my hands lest I should filch his hoard.

## HEREDITY

MAN goes fulfilling some old sire's design:  
His are the lips that touch the future's face,  
And his the hands by whose surpassing grace  
He brings the world its prophecy and shrine.  
Possession and free will and present need  
Commingle, while the spheres are moving on;  
Yet, piteously the sad night whispers, "Dawn  
Will come too late, for each to claim his meed."

O Father! What dost thou desire through me  
That thus so barren stand I in mine age?  
Thine aspirations I but faintly see,  
Yet hold thyself alone my heritage;  
While by the laws of mutability  
I leave mine own mark on the written page.

## SUPERMAN

IN me is dust wed to a master's will:  
I am the marriage of the Sod and Soul  
Of all earth's aspirations, and in whole  
Clairvoyant to celestial wisdom still.  
I thought that I was mortal man, until  
Above my being rose with surging roll  
Eternal powers, while below them stole  
Clay—in my body to itself fulfill.

O thou most dread, and yet beloved decree  
Of self-created Life, I love thee well.  
O thou most profitable state, I see  
A beauty in thee which I cannot spell,  
So mystically wrought with Heaven to be  
Held by the chains of the earth-bounded Hell.

## THE FUTURE

DOWN-PRESSING One, our hands unwitting touch!  
Our shoulders feel not, with their bended weight;  
We scarcely think on Thee, who art so much  
The guerdon and the donor of our Fate!  
With meagerness of mind we hesitate  
To mark the river's current, through its tide  
That flows from its far source to seas that wait  
And brooding skies that over them abide.

O cryptic future, by the eyelids fast  
With heavy dreams, thou wilt not give to us  
The direful burden of the out-told past!  
A Greek Athene in whose mind we thrust  
For cipherless eyes that question thy forecast,  
Thou lendst a wraith of beauty luminous.

## MY CRY TO THE ONE

NOT now, not yet, for me; but I am grown  
In lordly pride, I see thee—I rejoice.  
Thine the loud music! Thine the plenteous voice!  
Thine is the seed and sod and seeds re-sown!  
Thine the completion! Thine the crown and throne!  
Thine all the impulse! Thine the kept estate!  
Thine the kissed pilgrim waiting at the gate!  
Thine all the world, and all the sky—thine own!

Oh, how can I be sad when thou hast come  
To tilt the mountains over and climb on,  
Like some lost seraph stalking to the cloud!  
I speak thee in these vain words and am dumb;  
Nay, I but tune my trumpet Protean;  
I beckon to thee and I call aloud!

## LOVE UNFAILING

OH, if I only knew that thy mouth would never fail,  
I could draw Love down to me here, I could hold him  
forever;

For the day is warm in the glow of the sun's golden  
fire—

For the night is white with the moon and pale with  
the stars,

And passion cometh to Love at the sound of the lyre.  
If I only knew that thy mouth would never more  
fail—

If I only knew that thy life would never expire!

Feel! The kisses they fall on the golden censer's brim;  
The censer is Life—is Life in thy face ashine.  
It glories thine eyes—it lights the soft hair on thy  
brow—

It touches thy lips with red poppies—

It touches the tip of thine ear—and, oh, how

It magnifies all to supernal delight.

If thou livest on—why my heaven is here—it is now!





## LONGER POEMS



## THE NEW GENESIS

THERE was a God once—lying in the East—  
And Chaos was about Him, and no world  
But gray voluminous vapors; so the heart  
Was silent in the God, and only time—  
The soul-throbs of His being—made Him live.  
Then came a change, for He desired. Lo,  
The rivers ran with water; Heaven wept;  
And all the lakes and oceans they were filled;  
And all the streams and pools were given life.

And He desired, waking from a sleep  
Of ages inconceivable, and Earth  
Grew and grew green; and seasons—winter, spring,  
Summer and autumn—took their separate tasks,  
And learned to bear their load of forest, marsh,  
Meadow and mountain; while the day and night,  
Placed by their brow their brilliant sun and moon  
As rounded mirrors to behold themselves.  
And lo—the God desired All, All, All!  
And lo—the God desired and was man!

## NATURAL PROGRESS

### I

DAILY the course of some recurrent plan  
Makes us remember we are bent as sedge  
Upon Time's river at high heaven's edge;  
And the enamored sun is held in span;  
For, fugitively, do we seek through man,  
Still for his being's uttermost desire,  
Whose burning oil, upon a fateful fire  
Rose into flame, when first his world began.

For lo, there is a purpose in the whole  
Which doth outwisdom all conceived thought,  
And ushers the gold stars above the seeds,  
Whether earth work for our inherent soul,  
Or for self-comfort which through us is wrought,  
Since there prevails a purpose in our needs!

### II

Through usages of those primordial ties  
With which earth holds the matin and the moon—  
The passage of her life from night to noon—  
Or eve when she doth close her children's eyes—  
Or alien use which natural law defies,  
Still throbs the great desire, where all hearts meet  
About her throne like birds whose bound wings beat  
Athwart the rampart of the hidden skies.

## NATURAL PROGRESS

Therefore when seasons have their fruit recalled,  
And silent years have on their dim way fled,  
And cities have gone back to blowing sands,  
Let us remember (where her will has walled  
The bastioned sky) our purpose overhead,  
And the reseizure of our lips and hands.

### III

Whyfore are we of uneventful calm  
Desirous, while with certain fortitude  
Earth doth apparel us in this her mood,  
And chain us to acceptance of her alm,  
Letting life fall on us in bounteous balm,  
In easing comfort for the highest clay,  
Making a highway for us, night and day,  
Till we lie pillowed on her dusky palm?

For, like the morn, when she has lost her light,  
We could make for ourselves a lamp to guide—  
Tarnished, yet sacramental through the dark.  
Then with a trumpet heralding our flight,  
With noisy vision sounded far and wide,  
Call till our plea her kindlier ear would hark.

### IV

Yet there are matters foreign to the Sod,  
Investitures replenished year by year,  
Along the way of laughter, love and tear;  
Or some adventurous vision of a god,  
With which man goads himself by staff and rod,  
And makes the sandals of his own advance,  
And comforts thus his tiredness in trance  
Of alienation from the clamorous clod.

## NATURAL PROGRESS

For who can tell, but in the high emprise  
Of his attainment and incarcerate war,  
Rising between his body and his dream,  
He may exalt himself to sacrifice,  
While peace shall reign as it has reigned before,  
Bearing the martyrs down its quiet stream.

### V

And later blooms of an austerer coast  
May rooted in our firmer wisdom grow,  
And hold no commune with material earth  
In some pure air on a supernal coast,  
Where now in winds of chance they seem to blow—  
Those strange, mysterious blooms of death and  
birth.

## THE MAKERS OF TO-MORROWS

THINGS unapparent, unknown,  
Atoms that scarcely are wed,  
Hidden as seeds are sown  
Deep in the soft soil's bed,  
Thinner than tears unshed,  
Softer than softest silence  
The music when heaven sorrows—  
These are the gods of the realms and the sods,  
The Makers of To-morrows.

The world whirls, circles and crestward  
Is hung in its large blue sky;  
Day travels westward, and westward,  
And time exists but to die.  
Yet the past  
Will last,  
For the tombs of the Ptolemies stand high:  
On the Sphinx's breast  
Will the ages rest,  
And their opulent glories still try  
To obscure, in clouds of hidden shrouds,  
The Makers of To-morrows.

Ye who have come from the womb,  
Give to the past no thought;  
Ye who have great deeds wrought,  
Look not ahead to the tomb.

## THE MAKERS OF TO-MORROWS

Take but the present indeed,  
Enjoy now whatever will come.  
The glories of spring  
In remembering  
Are naught when her voices are dumb.  
See, the fair flowers, they grow  
Blossoming, exuding perfume;  
An ecstatic moment of bloom—  
Even with ye, even so!  
The flower and the sparrow  
Go under earth's mire and her marrow;  
They are dead things hidden from sight,  
To come back to rapture and bloom in a night.  
These are the gods of the realms and the sods,  
The Makers of To-morrows!

Still, in the midnight's train,  
In the hour of dew,  
Fresh wills come true,  
To make the world again.  
Phantoms of trembling import,  
Shadows of mighty sport,  
Coming to find the clay,  
Take their forms in the risen morns,  
And arise to meet the day.  
These are the gods of the realms and the sods,  
The Makers of To-morrows!

O nations born of the body,  
Peoples one in the clay,  
All of your life, like an arch of the sun,  
To glory will pass away.  
Ye, who are masters of wisdom,



## THE MAKERS OF TO-MORROWS

Cæsars of gold and of rule,  
Your slow, civilizing intention  
Shall bring forward the mass as your tool;  
And as they press on to the higher,  
The next generation shall pass—  
As dews on the roses transpire,  
As mist on the dark sea's glass—  
For decay dies into new birth  
To nourish the mothering earth.  
And the child comes out of the mother  
As ever it did before;  
And the things that are working unbid,  
And the tool that is hid—  
These are the great  
In the molding of fate.  
These are the gods of the realms and the sods,  
The Makers of To-morrows!

Things unapparent, unknown,  
Atoms that scarcely are wed,  
Hidden as seeds are sown  
Deep in the soft soil's bed,  
Thinner than tears unshed,  
Softer than softest silence  
The music when heaven sorrows—  
These are the gods of the realms and the sods,  
The Makers of To-morrows.

## BROTHERHOOD OF NATIONS

FROM East to West the breezes run  
And hardier storm-winds from the sea,  
While summer's day the sacred sun  
Sends to the season's granary.  
The years like birds are winged forth,  
The hours are nestled as spring bees,  
Till the long poles lean south and north  
And meet in star-rimmed majesties.

Draw nigh: the citron is in bloom,  
And olive trees on southern isles  
While life no winter can consume  
Nor cheat them of their rounded smiles.  
Beneath their leaves that swing and sway,  
Between which stuccoed roofs appear,  
The later pilgrims on their way  
Have come to find the cherished year.

Yet now before their course they drive  
A spirit utterly unshriven;  
For they would wholly be alive,  
And driven beyond earth, are driven  
To northern lands with lesser greed  
Of nurtured life and stronger soul,  
Where clearer spaces seem to breed  
A larger light beneath the pole.

## BROTHERHOOD OF NATIONS

Therefore the North, whose snows are pure,  
Must give us promise of surcease,  
And on her breast such life endure  
As cannot die and may not cease.  
From cape to cape of Labrador,  
We seek to find a resting place,  
And look upon the twin stars' face  
From what we are and were before.

O valiant sun that leads us on,  
And valiant moon whose life is lost,  
Usher us through the darkened dawn  
To where the day by night is crossed.  
And as we greaten by degrees,  
Our hearts must know there is no drouth  
Upon the North, for all her seas  
Have all the valors of the South

Therefore, with rigors let us sit  
In council, till we learn from them  
How yet to make our bodies fit  
To bear the coldness at her hem.  
For long, in barbarous splendor wrought,  
Was man's long failure in the South:  
He knew no need in soul or thought:  
His life was all one sensual mouth.

For we impatient in our need  
Cannot the silent word aver—  
How growth doth make all bodies bleed  
To lift the spirit up to her.

## BROTHERHOOD OF NATIONS

And hunger led by hunger's guide,  
A deep desire fixed in want,  
Soars o'er the world dissatisfied,  
Seeking a more luxurious haunt.

For host to host together lie  
Where suns the olive in the clay,  
Where life did first with earth combine  
To meet the vision of the day;  
Ere we, in thought, were hurled afar  
And by the mind were bid to see  
The tangled boughs beneath the star,  
Which make the northern cedar tree.

Now light has struck our wayward mind,  
Which now doth soul and body caress,  
Opening the eyes that once were blind  
Out in the carnal wilderness.  
And now there rise great phantom forms  
To question as they ask for balm;  
And after thunder of wild storms  
They find their peace in rainbow calm.

And from the body's warm caress  
Turned we like ghosts, to meet the good  
Of a contagious blessedness  
Which thought held in her alien brood.  
Till over long, confronting earth  
We saw the passage of her breath  
Kiss the wide open lips of birth,  
And the white lips of waiting death.

## BROTHERHOOD OF NATIONS

Meantime, the heavens lean above  
In starry vaults that seem eterne:  
Then, in the heart of spherul love  
Shall not our pulses meet and burn?  
For in the time ere earth shall wane,  
She shall our million lives imbue;  
Incarcerations still retain  
In splendor of her song and hue.

And when she passes that same course  
Which long has held her in her reign,  
Her soul shall be as ours, which force  
From death a rapture beyond pain.

## LIFE

O LIFE, infold me once more passionately:  
Forgive me!  
What if I should have mistaken thy achievements  
for thy purposes,  
Sorceress?  
Sweet-breasted mother, lean lowly, tenderly, caress  
ingly;  
Over my head put thy hand, O enchantress, O mate:  
Consume me, believe me.  
What if thy desire should not be this, my fate?  
If thou like an innocent, pale-cheeked girl did mis-  
takenly conceive me,  
Forgive me—pardon me:  
Suffer me once more to be to thee gladness.  
Suffuse me, delude me and harden me,  
Make me more resistant to thy sadness.  
Take thou compassion:  
Put thy red lips to mine, Life, till I drink of thy being.  
In the night I would be but the surf washed up from  
the ocean  
Unto thee!

Great-hearted warm Life, O Life of maturer emotions,  
Bride Life, wife Life—O poor and most pitifully  
chidden.  
Soft child of parents unseen, hardly discernible,  
Make me more kind to Thee, Thou of aloofnesses  
hidden,  
Sacramental, unreturnable.

## LIFE

Oh, live in me—forgive me!

Take me back unto Thee, once more prodigally and  
repentingly.

What I have known of Thee I have lived: O now  
live in me.

Test me, bone of Thy bone,  
Heavenward soaring.

Rest on my wing, O maiden Life young and adoring,  
Cling to me, Life, frail, girlhoodily—trustingly.

See, for the clouds pass by; they are only the front  
of the vapors;

Kiss me, thy sweet body tapers  
From rimmed hip to hip. O slip to my adamant  
shoulder.

Cling closer, bend nearer thy holder.

The wind goes over the blue sunset hills from me  
gustingly.

O Life, baby Life, featherweight, infantile, creepingly  
I ascend to my sleep with Thee sleepingly.

Take me,  
Child-bearing make me—

Forgive me. Lo, when the dawn wind cries to the  
morning, awake me:

Do not forsake me!

Ageless Life, older than Adam and Eve in the garden,  
Forgive me, pardon me, harden me!

Sphinx-like Life, with eyes of a cat, looking at  
All my imperfect potencies, exigencies,

## LIFE

Hear my vow:

Communicant with all I become as I bend to ascend  
to Thee now.

Forgive me, pardon me!

I rise—I pass on—I exult—and I come to Thee!



## STRUGGLE

WHAT mighty impulse broods about our life?  
It seems as if a tear could make the sea;  
And one evaded moment's agony  
Turn, like a bastioned army of the sands,  
To conquer guarded lands  
In times of storm and strife.

Above thee, Silent One, the clouds pass by;  
Yet is thy voice the thunder in the sky,  
And from sweet sleep's luxuriant beds of tarn  
Doth rise thy ancient body, with a sigh  
So deep, that it enfolds humanity,  
Endless, like Clotho's balls of yarn.

Then thou dost walk abroad in mighty state.  
Thy name is Struggle, morn and noon and late.  
Thou castest thy dim will, from void to void;  
And in thy giant arm the little world  
Nestles to thee in littleness and grief—  
Nestling to thee as if to be upheld,  
Quiet, as a doubting child may find belief,  
And toys with what thou hast toyed.

The Moon and Sun, the frequent stars that shine  
In vigils for themselves—these all are thine.  
Thou hath creation like a snake defied,  
And gathered lilies where white stones have died.  
Thou who awakest from the morning seas,  
Thou hath these things, and thou art one with these.

## STRUGGLE

Thou art the foeman to love's hidden hate,  
The anguished ardor of the desolate.  
The stars look for thee in their long embrace,  
That century on century did trace  
From earth's created self, even unto me.  
Dost swing the mighty tumults of the tides  
That lie in under-ocean; and there hides  
The soul of man within thee, as this sea.

## THE SONG OF THE DEAD ON THE BATTLE-FIELD

O DECENTLY put us away:  
We are the dead, we are lying  
Here on the battlefield, yearning  
For burial sweet as our brothers.  
We are the fallen, we know not  
The outcome to earth and the living,  
Of the great onslaught which slew us  
Sapping our bosoms of pain.  
So we lie still in our slumber—  
Battle-scars over our bodies—  
Numbness over our feeling—  
Waiting the Judgment Day.

O decently put us away,  
Ye who shall rise on the morrow,  
While we lie still in our slumber:  
Oh, rest us well for the night!  
Breathe moon-rise over the meadows:  
The sky is a flame of desire.  
Decently put us away  
Underneath longing and sorrow,  
Where we shall see no light breaking  
On the sun of another day.  
Moon and stars are resplendent,  
Pools and rivers translucent,  
Bathed in the black night's quintessence.

## THE DEAD ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Earth and Heaven a-quiver  
Lean now one to the other.  
But we lie still in our being—  
Here in the death of the body,  
Never now speaking our meaning—  
No more hearing or feeling  
The pulses of men or their voices—  
The long, deep silence stealing  
Over our palpitant heartstrings—  
Bending our sobbings to silence,  
Wait we the sun of no morrow.

Decently put us away;  
Let us have damask to wind us  
Folding our limbs in its texture;  
Death flowers around us to crown us;  
White flowers, yea, and bright crimson,  
Purple the passion blooms also.  
All of the pomp of life-color,  
Crocuses swathed in red yellow,  
Bathed in the lap of the sunshine,  
Place o'er our corpses, about us  
Where the cheek deepens to shadow,  
On the side where the chin line is ended.  
Over the battlefield's grasses  
Dampened with blood of our wounds,  
Lay the soft blossoms of morning,  
Blooming and blushing in beauty.  
See! We are cold! You may touch us!  
Arms stretching over our shoulders;  
Lips burning chill on our fingers;  
Hidden face dropped on our bosom,  
Bowed o'er the hearts lost to motion.

## THE DEAD ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Decently put us away:  
We argue not for the future,  
Think not of reason to give you,  
Why we should yet wish for glory.  
Let it suffice, that we enter  
Portals covered with shadows,  
Curtained yet from our seeing,  
While we arise on no morrow.  
Now, we know naught of existence;  
Stilled is the wind of emotion.  
As stilled is the aspen tree slender,  
So stilled is the pulse of our souls.

O decently put us away;  
For no night waits on the morrow  
Bringing us aught of repletion,  
To replenish a life we have spent.  
Give to us, then, our due honor,  
Ye who shall rise to the day—  
Ye who have fought through the battle  
Which led to the dark of our tomb.  
If we had lived, we had met you,  
Worn your triumph of laurel;  
Come in victorious greeting,  
One in the triumph of day!

Decently put us away  
Into the doubt and the darkness.

## THE GULF STREAM

### I

The world has a beautiful breast! Lo, here on the sea  
It is soft with the fluid of vortices, atoms made free,  
And yet held in the fetter of love. The great wave  
    and the rain,  
And the kindly long wind with his trumpet of pain,  
Shall here have surcease of grief that must be;  
And the ribbed rough red crown of the sun on the  
    sphere  
Shall look lovelier here.  
O delicious sweet wane  
Of the current of storm to a delicate strain.  
Here perishes wrath into calm in the spray  
And flies with the wings of its spirit away.  
O nipple-red sun, thou wouldst have us drink  
Of the light as a child at the brink  
Of the day.

Within the southern seas, the seas to south,  
The Gulf Stream lies, blue as with drouth.  
Tangleous Gulf Stream, what wilt thou here, in thy  
    multiform flow,  
In thy prismatic flight where the bright tides go,  
Weird as the temples of Heaven, whose clouds are  
    as thou.  
What wilt thou with billows that leap and with tem-  
    pests that plow?

## THE GULF STREAM

Upsteaming Gulf, thou dost make thy wave coast  
Like a ghost.  
Now watch how the hurtling caught wave, like a  
    baby asleep,  
Wanders down to the deep.  
It sends itself to the weariless worlds from afar  
In sidereal love as a star.  
Does it dream of the surface of ocean, or ocean-  
    crossed floor?  
Nay, the babies laugh on as they sink to the bottom-  
    less level, and creep  
Back again with the winds that like music from bugles  
    outpour  
Their clamorous challenge to motion and sound as  
    before,  
Where the lone Gulf Streams are.

But behold—the blue withers to night—  
Veil after veil it is breaking across, to be free  
To spit in the face of the stars.  
The history of the dim bars  
And foam of the world breaks the hid mystery.

Was not the past one great thee—  
When waters turned back, with the lure of their  
    streams,  
Toward the moon and her dreams?—  
Toward the great sunken sea?  
As the ocean pours on to the lea,  
Ye did heave your wide bulks, then were free.  
Then the mighty stars dropt, as berries might drop  
    from the tree,



## THE GULF STREAM

And lo, as at sinking of suns, the rimmed oceans  
are red.

They arise now to mourn for their dead:  
They come up with the night and the dawn,  
The surge of the waters, that form a great bowl,  
and surge on.

O waters of chance, how pure and how cool,  
Like a dim mountain pool!  
Ye are sunned on by suns—  
Ye are dwelt on by dew; and the store  
Of a garland of hours doth measure the wreath of  
your crown,  
Till the white waves, in white foam, like white aspho-  
dels pour,  
On the head of the cliffs and the down.

Who gazing on thee has concept of thy multiform  
chance,  
Thy circumfering trance,  
O sea!  
Thou dost reach like a serpent, and bury the swan-  
necks of peninsulas, where  
The isthmuses lie in thy lair,  
Thy night plotting with storms,  
Where rocks clinging above, lean like land longing  
to thee—  
Thou molder of forms!  
And in thy green hands are the soils of the lands,  
The porches of stars,  
Where dead skulls like jewels have lost all their light,  
Till the day  
Cometh forth to return them their prismatic ray;



## THE GULF STREAM

And thou falter and fail, while he lingereth there,  
For he toucheth thee too on the height—  
On the height of thy spray  
In an all-loving way.

What guideth thy course,  
O sea? what shadowy will, in an orb,  
Like a motherly face,  
Can absorb  
Thy imperious force?  
Spender of change, what fellowship hast thou with  
loss—

All pervader of life?—There are three  
Who have fellowship over the sea—  
The sun and the moon and the air.  
For the moon pulls him high; and the sun pulls  
him high;

And the air lent him now, as a garment to wear,  
Is a breath of himself into which he must die.

O moon, thou succored the past;  
Thou wert mother to him.

And, O red sun, die last  
Since thy satellite air shall recover him fast;  
For already the clouds which are filled with the dim  
Are his envoys to thee.

When thou touch the last star  
Which is sunken to earth, O sun, thou shalt see  
that he traveleth far.

For the continents rise, which were stars, which were  
set

In his oceanous fret.  
He would moor to thy bar—  
And forget.

## THE GULF STREAM

He would touch thee at rim.

For all shall be thine when the fair years shall  
fall—

When the earth meets the sun and the sun meets  
the All!

But thou, simple Gulf Stream—simple and sinuous,  
thou,

I come back to thee now.

My tired head lies on thy warm breast to sleep, and  
be still.

Lull me with bees in thy waves;

Hold me in caves

Where my spirit shall connote the will

Which is killing thee now, and shall kill

Even me, till my body shall fill

My incarcerate overplus soul;

And thy lessening rill

Shall lie dead in thy goal.

Nay, since there is slumber no more in thy pale arms  
for me,

Let me sing thee myself, as thou sang me the song  
of the sea!

## II

Oh, how passionately doth the soul

Make a Gulf Stream lonely and warm

With its eddyous storm!

O polluted pale wisdom of self—hybrid and curving,  
loose moons

Of the foam that but gathers to swoons!

## THE GULF STREAM

Beating against the walls of self, I ride  
Forever on the omnipresent stream.  
Sometimes within the current's dark, for hours I hide  
And lie apart to dream;  
Until the end of all surrender mine,  
I sink at last into the Gulf divine.

In the Gulf Stream of Life, the senses lie bosomed in  
under its effluent tide,  
For what is more sensuous, sinuous, than these sensu-  
sate waters' warm breast?  
Here, slumber itself with its soul finds rest,  
In the Stream bridged 'twixt ocean and ocean,  
In this passionate winding way—  
In this wild contagion of motion,  
Half smile and half sway—  
In this nest of the eeries seas—  
In this line of the foam and toss—  
In pliant line which the deep seas cross,  
As a bird swinging south and north, this suppliant  
line—  
Delirious and divine!

Phantom women of Sense,  
Five in the depths of the sea,  
Wherefore have ye learned to chatter to chide and  
to sway—  
Yea, for what consequence?  
Have ye not selves to reform, and to keep ye all day?  
O maidens, have ye not faces to brighten in sleep  
And white brows to remoon with a thought?  
Have ye not strange eyes and deep,  
With a long line of lashes that curve into naught?

## THE GULF STREAM

Gates of the furtherest seas, where do ye close?  
On hapless waves of sullen ebony?  
Or make ye glad with purple, gold, and rose?  
Where is the gateway of the furtherest seas?  
I have no yearn for anything beside  
Abyssmal calm.  
O senses, no more strive  
To hold the gold bowl in the wandering sea;  
For oceans upon oceans yet  
Shall roll  
And make my soul.  
I would forget,  
O ye five maidens whirled  
About our world,  
And grow almost unto one golden girl  
That tempts with voice and touch and lips vermilioned  
in their curl,  
And ears that listen to the shells the level deep has  
held,  
And smelt the seaweed's tangled drift, and the balm  
That the Sargasso sea has carried—and seas that to  
the far south ride—  
Wherein all things are created, that in ye abide.

Spoon-shapen Gulf Stream,  
Wreathed with white wave foams that crown the  
white head of old Dream,  
Wouldst thou bathe him where the blue skies swell,  
Where bright heaven comes up and bright hell  
Runneth down with a yell?  
Wouldst thou mirror him there in sound and sight,  
As if they were hung with the tiniest globules of  
motion and light?

## THE GULF STREAM

The senses recede and are free;  
For he marks the long predestined sight of a color in  
tone,

And heareth the diurnal earth moan,  
With her crumbling steep burden of lands,  
She humbles the mountains high.

But the sea climbeth too, and expands:

It climbeth to touch on the sky,

Which the Dream from his lair

Leaps to touch from his Tritonous plunge in the air,

Singing songs loose of bearing and sense,

Now harping on seaweed strings.

The shells give him odor and scent:

The brine gives the sweet salt taste:

Singing long! singing far!

He winds the great sheaf on his song, of the waters  
awaste,

Singing loud! singing far!

He echoes the cavernous shores with the voices he  
brings,

The voices imperious and strong,

Mixed with murmurous chants from the sybilline  
sirens of song.

So our dreams do arise from the darks of the Deep:

What we have, in our sleep,

Comes up from your burden of weeds,

From your gray mists that creep,

From the will of our needs—

From the sea!

Dead, like a storm that has perished,

Dead, like a mouth that Death has kissed,

Over the Gulf creeps the mist.

## THE GULF STREAM

Pallid as pale lips forbidden  
To press in a tender full line,  
The tarn of the sunlight is hidden  
And cannot more shine!  
Down, down, O Gulf, fling your weight,  
Lest thy waters now loosen and climb.  
O curved waves run, like the will of fate,  
Out of the wind of time!

Light again in the sensiate Gulf,  
Light all over the sea!  
Light—as if mystical love  
Hid in the cloak of the foam,  
Purpled with wings of the dove,  
Came restlessly home!  
Light as the sun in his prism, kneels on the ocean's  
tide,  
With blessings of infinite wisdom, where curves of  
his sickles swing wide,  
As the waves of the air, he swirls;  
As the dance of the Silver-Sari, danced by the Indian  
girls.  
The silver sickle of time here reaps, in his endless  
flight,  
The spirit of all of the waters, to bind them and hold  
them to light.

With spirals of serpentine cleavure, the Gulf Stream  
runs on to the moon—  
As once, with its pain and its leisure, its bloodless  
veins drank of the swoon  
Of the Senses, which gave them their pleasure,  
brought to them death as a boon.



## AN INCENSE SONG

BEHOLD, thou Lord, my songs no more shall greet thee,  
In plaintive runes of unaccustomed rhyme;  
For I have seen the dark blue spaces meet thee  
And I have heard Thy heart beat upon Time.

The body Thou hast wrought me is a lyre,  
And sensitized the clay Thy hand hath wrought.  
The yearning heart is vibrant with desire  
And her desire is to Thee, and her thought.

Behold, O God! All light and life art of Thee,  
Praised by the waving censer of the Moon:  
Behold for the chaotic soul doth love Thee,  
Swayed by the finite senses into tune.

Behold, behold! The Earth and Heaven do know  
Thee:

All of the shackles of the world are Thine:  
Behold! for Thine idolaters shall show Thee  
By adulation that Thou art divine.

The Human Thou created, clay-wrought mortals,  
An Adam who hath eaten of Thy Tree.  
Behold! like wind they sway Thine open portals,  
And, being wisdomed, are but One with Thee.

If weakness Thou dost banish by Thine ardor,  
And molten sin Thou drive from Thy create,  
What large rebellious thoughts shall they not harbor,  
Being of all, save virtue, satiate?

## AN INCENSE SONG

Will they not come and Thee dispel and shatter?  
I, even Man, Thee slay, myself to rise?  
The jointure of Thy spirit and of matter,  
Becoming from mine own self to be wise?

Thou poor, Thou fragile God, some star shall tremble  
In its rotation round Thine orb'd throne;  
And all the wakened Earths and Hells assemble  
In insurrection, for Thou art Their Own.

O Thou most childish God, in pity,  
If so, I, Man, come to mine own by right:  
Shall I not like a sovereign take Thy city  
And claim supremacy of rule and might?

Behold, O God! The Sun, the Sun is falling—  
The round ball Thou hast wrought mine eyes to bind:  
As I to Thee in ripened strength am calling,  
The light is passing, which has kept me blind.

O Thou, Thou fallen Lord, no more I need Thee,  
For am I not Divinity and Love?  
If 'twas Thy Life I drank, why should I heed Thee?  
Thou art below me and no more above.

Watch Thou: I say it was a deed of error  
Which made me underneath Thy Rod and Rule—  
A vast, primeval Modesty and Terror,  
Which made me seem a pupil in Thy school.

But Man is like Thee, then shall he not pity  
When he shall enter Thy dominions in  
And take possession of thy crown and city:  
Thou dust-choked idol, pity Thee this sin.



## AN INCENSE SONG

Shall Man Supreme, with Thy high court around him  
And the blue spaces and the laden air,  
Not feel exalted pride of birth surround him,  
And see Thee in his likeness to be fair?

Shall he, shall he not lift Thee in his mercy—  
A lonely Monarch—while he is divine?  
For Thou his secret want, can he disperse Thee  
Though shackles of the World no more be Thine?

What is the compensation for Desire,  
For Longing and the Will to be afraid?  
O Thou! Thou answer me! Was Nature's fire  
Which burnt in aspiration but to fade?

I need to yearn, O fallen Lord! O fallen!  
I crave Thy Secret Presence to my love:  
The morning and the evening star art callen,  
Yet Heaven is all below me, not above.

Thou bend beside me—Man, O Lord—and tell me:  
Nay, stand Thou, while I kneel before Thy feet:  
I claim the right for some force to compel me  
That I may see a vision more complete.

This purple robe take from me and this scepter  
That move the spheres that hold the Buddha's dust,  
When Zeus, a human found, he did accept her  
That he might pleasure, passion, and distrust.

O Thou—behold, Thou Christian God—I anguish:  
Wilt Thou not aid me? Thou?—more vast than they?  
For, till the real Christ came all hearts did languish,  
Thou—to whom later generations pray.

## AN INCENSE SONG

Behold, behold! for Earth and Heaven do know Thee:  
All of the shackles of the World were Thine.  
Behold, for Thine idolaters did show Thee  
That by their worship Thou didst seem divine.

Behold, O God! Some passing star may reach Thee  
Guiding the wise men to the higher East.  
The waving censer of the Moon shall teach Thee:  
Nature is to Thee, O Lord, as Thy high priest.

And I, I, God, shall I not kneel before Thee  
With plaintive runes of old accustomed rhyme?  
For Thou, my Impulse, shall I not adore Thee  
When I have heard Thy heart beat upon Time?

Behold, we stand before the Secret Throne!  
Behold, I kneel before Desire to rise;  
And with Thee, passing on to the Unknown,  
I feel the yearning for a Paradise.

## ASCENDING LOVE

THERE are fields of Orange Lilies  
Where the hot breezes blow—  
In the heart-time, in the throe-time,  
Bending golden glory low.  
In the heart-time, in the thirst-time,  
Where the meadow grasses quiver  
Mad Orange Lilies grow  
By a river!

Many a throstle, many a word  
From some soft brown-throated bird—  
Branching music waking midnight,  
Meadow music waking day,  
Whimpered vows that may be broken,  
Whispered promises unspoken,  
Hesitances of mutation,  
Waft the Orange Lilies' way.  
Mad Orange Lilies grow  
By a river!

Musing there alone at evening  
When the dusk suppressed the water,  
Musing there alone conceiving  
That the Earth was Heaven's daughter—  
When the very heart did falter  
With intuitive believing  
That the primal Earth was better  
Than this Earth that men should alter—

## ASCENDING LOVE

Lo, there came a presence semblant,  
By the water with its flow,  
Passing o'er the bracken pendant—  
Bosoms breathing, eyes below,  
Hair a-misting, lips bow-twisting,  
Dimple cleft the chin astroe—  
Bestrewn stamen-astralation.  
Mad Orange Lilies grow  
By a river!

Hush, the lapping water falters;  
Eyelids droop o'er eyes of sloe;  
Petals wither 'neath sun's altars,  
'Neath the sun of fire throe.  
Syllibants unuttered seethe;  
Tethered trees with leaves a-bluster;  
Bounden pulses joy bequeath;  
Drench of stars to dimness cluster.  
Mad Orange Lilies grow  
By a river!

Bracken waste, O bracken tender,  
Press with urge her coming feet!  
Urge with air her figure slender,  
Restrain and still, my pulse retreat.  
Wanton waste of passion holy  
Breeds a tryst with melancholy;  
Iron manacle on wrist  
Earth-cut bruises intertwist.  
Happy juices, saps of sluices,  
By the hungering soil comprest,  
Wing away to happy uses,  
By an April hour confest.

## ASCENDING LOVE

Mad Orange Lilies grow  
By a river!

Voice of woman as the wind-drift  
When soft lilted over the mow  
Of the grasses, in the mowrift,  
Tossed by Summer's willful toe.  
Sweet fermenting, love up-storing  
To a draft of skyier dye—  
Wilder fantasies outpouring  
In the flagon of a sigh.  
Mad Orange Lilies grow  
By a river!

Tilt the ball of sunlight closer;  
Lift the lily-swaying cup,  
Golden cup, as Heaven's doser,  
Ambrosial drug the ground sucks up.  
Brown bird on the wing a-quiver,  
With the foam of song asplash—  
Meadow-mourner, sky-adorn—  
Softly on the twilight flash.  
Come, O woman, heart-completer,  
Foot-a-mountain as a doe—  
Spirit than the fire fleeter!  
Mad Orange Lilies grow  
By a river!

## A SOUTHERN ISLAND

HUSH! for there is no light, and the isle like a great  
bird

Takes flight into the sea.

Listen and watch for the morning word,  
Yellow and orange, yet scarcely heard

The sun took over the lea  
When the evening wind was stirred.

How many hours of peace here can we dwell apart,  
Hid by the southern hills, crossed by the southern  
wave?

A little hour perchance, or long in need of the heart,  
For the pulse leaps up and reclaims what it has at  
the start—

Longing and hunger, and then fulfillment and strength  
for the brave.

Late in the afternoon, the moonflower leaned from  
her tree,  
Making her body a trumpet, long and slender and  
white.

She dropped among her leaves as she called to the  
moon on the sea:

“Arise, O moon, arise, the beeches wait for thee,  
And the melancholy tide for thee is filled with light:  
Come soon, come passionately!”

## A SOUTHERN ISLAND

Here along the main the cedars are red in bark,  
The banana tree is rimmed by a round banana  
crown

Waist high under the blossoms, red and satin and  
dark.

The palm to the heavens listens, as the elves to the  
moonflowers hark:

The cacti with the weight of a million thorns leans  
down

To the sod, rigid and grim and stark.

Lovely! The horn of the plenteous ground is,  
full

Of the bounteous mother earth and the burdensome  
bulbs she breeds—

Finger plants that are bright and scarlet and brown  
and dull.

A million spices the myriad marsh plains cull

As for their need—

Fruitage the gourd-rimmed cherry flower and fruitage  
and weed—

Air-vines soft and clamorous, gray as the sea-  
weed's mull.

Heavy as air can be, this parasite of the south,  
Heavy about her body like a vaporous cloak let  
fall,

Perfumed with white of lilies, slender and supple  
and tall,

Or as a kiss of the fire on the lips of an untouched  
mouth—

Weird, delicious, motionful, contagious and  
nurturing all.



## A SOUTHERN ISLAND

Watch! For the black and the blue bird circle, the  
red bird sings,  
And the sparrows twitter in sleep,  
And the land bird flies and is gone, in the cover the  
darkness brings.

Who is it that lies  
Like a gourd across my door?  
With her two red breasts, and her skin like an oily  
coconut rind?  
Has the moon forgot to shine, and the darkened  
clouds grown more?  
The white leaves by the wind  
Are shaken, and now in their heart are sunken her  
eyes!

Yet, why should I not forgive,  
For there in the heat of the noon:  
She brought me cherries and moonflowers stemmed  
from their tree?  
Even life that is kindly must torture to make us free.  
And the moonflowers and cherries are lying struggling to live,  
In the still where the shadows swoon.  
And from the sky comes a piercing long shaft filled  
with light,  
The created pinion that brought  
The end of my thought,  
And lulled me to sleep with the night.

Where is the nest of the lands? Oh, is there an  
island more?  
Thou canst return with evening, as surely as before.



## A SOUTHERN ISLAND

Now the island nest is empty, the last of the lands  
has flown;

And I shall be gone with the spring, when thou shalt  
return from the sea;

For I shall go north and northward, where the  
piteous wind has blown

My mind from the lure of fruitage, of flower and grass  
and tree,

Though the south shall hold forever the bird in its  
ecstasy!

## A SOUTHERN SCENE

SILENTLY before the cottage door  
The tidal-river seeks the boundless sea—  
Far down the distance, where this silver lea  
Withstands the ocean's pressing waves no more,  
But yields unto the ocean's monarchy.

Silently upon the silver strand  
That just divides the waters meeting here—  
Silently upon the waters near  
The moonlight shimmers in a golden band,  
Mirroring the moon, the moon of a southern land.

Now up and down, the tidal billows roam,  
The murmurs from its waters yearning still,  
To pass the banks on the seaside and drill  
Through the cold sands, and reach their ocean home,  
While through the dark there cries the whippoorwill.

Behind the cottage lies a tangled space,  
And there wild vines and trees are interwed,  
With rattlesnakes and wayward lizards bred;  
And there couched to the ground, the panthers pace  
Their path into the distance with sleek tread.

A life is on the river—on the land,  
In undertides and in the silent grass  
That groweth lazily where sunbeams pass;  
And yet it is alone, without command  
The fervid heat breaks on the heart alas.

## A SOUTHERN SCENE

The southern stars are now adrift—arove—  
With light that reaches low upon the stream,  
Its water bearing on the golden beam.  
And from the jungle and the orange grove  
Descends a subtle perfume and a dream.

## THE TAMARIND TREE

LEAFLESS none of the year  
Stands the tamarind tree—  
Older by far than the other trees that appear on the  
    lea—  
Old as the ocean itself, for its leaves like drops of  
    the foam  
Slender and green, on their cycle of branches austere  
Tangling themselves reappear.  
Longer than doubt and than darkness this trunk  
    stands alone  
And the bough of it blooms all the year.

Now is it planted away from its Indian home,  
And the African shore does not bathe it in floods of  
    the Nile.  
It waits for me here, in my garden, where stranger  
    trees roam  
Through the sod with their roots, and to Heaven with  
    their boughs,  
On my lone southern isle.  
Around it fidelios walk in a white-stemmed row  
With their gossamer leaves one looks through.  
They protect it or marshal it on  
As a grove of young maples a yew.  
And I hear with no sound how they talk to the tree  
And cheer it with hands underground!

## THE TAMARIND TREE

Moody this morning, I came here myself to find  
ease

With the heart of the trees—

Before the young dawn, like a young saffron slave  
had outspread

Her tent overhead.

And lo 'neath the tree

There came comfort, and secrets that speak

In the silence where tongues like convolvulus blos-  
soms grow weak

In their easure of sense;

For the tamarind tree

With its mighty grave force had leaned unto me,

As the sky might lean down from a heaven in-  
tense,

Or the sun press close to the sea.

There I lay down in the noon;

For I could not behold

The richness and rapture of sky that was merging  
to gold.

And the sod by the roots of the tamarind tree, leant  
me grace

Of a sweet resting place;

And I slept till the hour when the shadows of noon  
lost their form,

And the long afternoon came to pause, and around  
The fidelios circled like maidens of midnight and  
morn.

And out of the tamarind came such gold wine

That it seems a libation I drank to the good of each  
vine.

## THE TAMARIND TREE

How much stranger the silence by night, as I stand  
by my door!

For the sun like a master, led day to his chamber  
of light,

Where the dusk winds outpour

From the billows that sing of the west—

Where the tamarind trees are my kith and my kin,

Are the trees that I long for, and feel from within.

I have told my heart's grief to them: now I am free!

Oh, the tamarind tree!

## THE LITTLE SCAR

Lo, what is this upon thy wrist  
Thou new-found Love of mine?  
A little scar, like a purple star,  
Where the blue veins intertwine—  
Upon the wrist, below the kist  
Shell-shade palm of thy hand.  
Give me to understand?

Far and wide over waste and moor,  
Long as the land might be,  
Have I held a pipe to my full red lips  
To call for the lips of thee.  
I thought thee white as the driven snow  
That fell on the autumn's flame,  
And it brought the spring of imagining  
Back when with thee it came;  
For in my thoughts have I held thee fair,  
And have sought thee, land by land,  
As a thirsting traveler seeks a well  
Hid deep in a desert sand.

Yet, is Life a thing of Fate,  
For the Little the Great breeds;  
And closed is the gate immaculate  
If the bloom be the dye of the seeds.  
Nor the sun shall shine, nor the moon divine,  
Nor the planets wake which are seven,  
If a little scar like a purple star  
Can banish a man from Heaven.

## THE LITTLE SCAR

Would, O would, in the endless not  
That we should be forgiven;  
But what has been cannot be forgot  
In the plane of the Pleiades even.  
For Man who is lower than Heaven far  
Shall never understand  
The little scar, like a purple star,  
On the white of a woman's hand.



## ACHEON

I SAW the great Acheon, artist, sage,  
Mounting the paths of knowledge and the soul,  
And I did ask him, "Whither goest thou?"  
Simply, in the way the systems roll  
About their sun, from out his bearded age  
He answered, "Child, it is to Heaven I go."

The stars were lit on the gray cloaking night;  
And miniature stars, the fireflies on the grass.  
And through the dimness, I beheld his face.  
"To Heaven," I said, "What mean'st thou?" Then  
    did pass  
A flush about his cheek, and sprang a light  
Within his eye. "To Heaven, child? To grace."

The moon arose and from the dark abyss  
Of pine trees laid her head upon the sky  
In open splendor.—"Night is but a thought  
That clouds our vision when the moons pass by,"  
Acheon said, "and, in such guise as this,  
It is at last the universe is wrought."

Thus ended then our talk. And he at last,  
As if his words were driftweed on the shore,  
Ended his speech, and in the still  
His voice for me was silent evermore.  
Across his wide browned face a glory passed,  
Concording death and the eternal will.

## ACHEON

My God, to finger a dead woman's face,  
To let wild kisses fall on her deep hair,  
To feel the power of sex in death, to grow  
Dumb to the force of all premeditate prayer;  
And yet above oneself to feel the grace  
Of this, nor pondering have the right to know.

Acheon knelt; then with his large swift hand  
He touched her hem, a feather's weight of touch.  
The dampness from the water of her gown  
Burnt him like fire, he, inoculate,  
Until the fire of contact so brought down  
Upon his soul a longing overmuch.

He held her hand, he breathed upon her feet:  
His ear harkt at her bosom, and his eyes  
Sunken on hers forgot the sights he saw.  
Such is first passion. From without came cries  
Of children all unheard, who passed the street:  
Such is desire for life, and such its law.

He rose, and lit two tapers standing by,  
To place them at the altar of her head:  
He took her hands, and bathing them in tears  
Wiped the lake slime from off their palms instead:  
He folded the large white arms still and high  
Upon her breast, above the beat of years.

He hunted till he found a linen sheet  
Of coarse wrought texture; then with gentle pain  
He wound it o'er her body: her drenched hair,  
Hung to the side, he fixed with tender care.  
He tilted the head until the chin reposed,  
And closed her eyes to never wake again.

## ACHEON

The children entered, motionless they stood,  
A brooding flock of geese from out whose throat  
No echo rang, till her child reached the bed,  
And the small arms were round her neck and float  
Of black curls on her breast. "My God, I would  
I too were as thy child!" Acheon said.

He put the child away in tender wise,  
And then he rose again; and while the throng  
Of small guests stood all motionless, was he  
Unconscious of their presences for long.  
Bent he his eyes once more upon her eyes,  
Finding within them now eternity.

Then passed Acheon onward from the tomb,  
Telling to all he saw, what he had seen;  
And some believed him, others called him mad.  
But knowing well the thing had only been  
A revelation to his soul, he had  
No passion left in anger to consume.

And so he blamed them not; men seemed to him  
But torches for the soul, which lit, or still  
Unlighted, in the end should find their light.  
He laughed if they laughed, bent unto their will—  
Wept if their eyes for his own grief grew dim;  
And if they half saw—saw he with their sight.

O God, what was his greatness? To live life  
As if it were the future and the goal,  
To lose himself in being, nor aspire  
To reach beyond the uninitiate soul;  
To take from others but what they could give,  
Ever returning to them something higher.

## ACHEON

No eulogy can rise to praise the good:  
Their happiness lies in their constant strife  
To better grievous hurts and uncontrol.  
Their thanks are oft to be misunderstood.  
He painted the one picture of his life  
Upon the canvas of a human soul.

\* \* \* \*

O lest my lyrics should desire a lyre  
Let me lie in the hills all day  
And bathe my brow in a brook of fire,  
And pluck green myrtle and milk-white spray.  
For, lo, I lie underneath the sky—  
Nothing can take it away!

## TOWARD THE STARS

O SPACE, that as a mother to a child  
Leans thy fair brow! O beatific Time!  
O Heaven that falls on man's ear as a vow  
Uttered in secret silences sublime!  
And white moon's radiance like an orison,  
Bend down—come down—lean o'er our world, even as  
The Night doth rest upon her Nubian arm.

Rest, ye Exalted Essences, for lo  
The earth waits for you with a lap of snow.  
The low sod grovels and then learns to grow,  
Groping for spring, for you. In winter's prime,  
The great birds dip their wanton throats in rhyme,  
And out of stillness come with rhythm wild,  
For you. Descend then, have a pity kind.  
The grass climbs upward to the air to find  
Her tenderous blades. Descend, O undefiled:  
Summer for you has garnished her round dome.  
Descend, O elements, about whose feet  
Winds, as the tendrils of the air, make moan.  
Man has for you a need that brings him home.  
Increase his discontent to call you nigh.  
The creature of a moment's wonderment,  
He stands, and gazes on the nightly tent,  
And at the orb transmuted to the sky;  
Nor dares he question, lest his voice should cry  
All the past ages emptied, dissonant.

## TOWARD THE STARS

Come, show him kinship, with your garments dipped  
In plenteous ocean, where the twilight sipped  
From sun-bowl painted with a wine-deep dye.

Bend and come down across the withering slopes,  
The withering slopes that wish for your descent,  
Because all things must meet to make them fair:  
Surely a chosen place has lambent air?  
Naught can her latent ways of naught defer:  
She parts the dim fulfillments from their hopes:  
Heaven and Earth are disengaged by her:  
Her dewless pollen is on mountains sent,  
For they grow pregnant in their solitude,  
And round their crown the spaces are as far  
As round the seas and meadows, which still brood  
Waiting for the eclipse of some long star  
Hung in the vertex far.

The slow great withering slopes loom, and expand  
By distance fanned,  
And weary as the bird upon the wing  
The winds die round their lonely harboring,  
As if they also sometimes ceased to sing.

O slopes, then, whyfore wait ye for this boon?  
Know ye not yet the spaces shall be far?  
Have ye forgot that Time is lost from tune,  
And Heaven is hung above the farthest star?  
Do ye not well remember, Ethers came  
Between the lily and the ancient flame,  
To part the shame-dust from the seraphim;  
Or mocked ye never at the deep sea's rim



## TOWARD THE STARS

To part from you the Dipper and the Horn?  
O wondrous orbs like Death, serene and sad,  
None marvel that ye hide your face from morn,  
Whose blatant passion is a thing unglad  
To those who drink the beaker past the brim  
And fail, with life's eternal recompense  
Viewless in the immense.

Therefore, ye Elements, whose ways are set  
Above compassion, pass; and, withering slopes,  
Look elsewhere in change and chance for hopes.  
If all the lost blue, like a bird, should fall,  
Ye should not hear a murmur, nor should see  
A sign more bright on Buddha's enshrined wall,  
Nor on the manger hid in Galilee.

So, space, I would not have ye bend so low,  
Nor lose from airs your help where they may grow  
The precious stems of bliss—nor Time (O thou  
Who hast the danger of Eternity)  
Falter a moment on the cliffs of Now—  
Nor Heaven spread a speech for euphony.  
But let me sleep, sweet stars, the while my brain  
Is fraught with ertia, till I swoon in pain.

Let me imagine that each light may fall,  
From habitude exultant, upon all  
That wills to have it near; still can withdraw  
The groping hand from light, as if to twine  
Again upon itself, that some dear vine  
Of circles may rewreathe it to that law  
Of the supernal. Nearer come again  
The long preheritors of destiny.

## TOWARD THE STARS

Ah nay, no slumber crowns the balm of pain,  
The great consumer of our lethargy.  
We would not sleep—imagining ye to find—  
But rather would we sweep across your main,  
As in a storm the gullies of the sea  
Give forth the spill and spilth of all their kind.  
We sacrifice  
To make again our own heredity!

We grow more wise, and twine our own skies round:  
We shall become as gods! 'Tis memory  
That for so long has kept us from our own.  
Such echoes as affect our circumstance  
Have made our consequential failure sound  
As Circean trumpet blasts across the sea  
Between this life and Heaven. Wake, be free!  
Forget how long the toil has been for tone,  
Till we could cry across the steep hills' trance—  
Across the withering slopes to power and sight,  
Forget the tenure of the outlived night:  
Forget the claims which have our weak wills bound  
Unto the ground!

Let dispelled records of the passing, lie  
When they have served our aim,  
To show how progress came—  
How from the sod the stalwart man walked high  
And pressed upon the eagle in his flight;  
For faster in the far air of the sky  
We shall assume our change, until behold  
A moment is our mold,  
A cloud our dye  
By which we are distinguished and passed by!



## TOWARD THE STARS

O soul, what are the withering slopes again?  
Not the thick mountains of predestined doom,  
By which both Abel and his brother Cain  
Are kept with spotted children in the gloom,  
Nor the gold apple-eating sons of Eve.  
Not Nomad sepulchers, nor still the tomb  
That opened on the third day, as a womb,  
Ready to let the child of spirit forth.  
They can obscure the stars' light by no troth,  
But shelter earth, until by our own will  
They call on us to mount. They do distil  
The balm of spirit where the heart is wrath.

## TO A CHILD

STRANGER, why hast thou come from balmy sleep,  
Whose kingdoms are the stars that drowse and burn,  
To habitate the body's ancient keep  
Wherewith thine eyes can only dimly turn  
Their pleading wonder back insatiate?  
Why not the white moon's orb inhabitate,  
Whose death was ere the cycle of thy birth—  
A fatal birth, through which thy members pass  
Into volition in revolving earth?  
Why hast thou come to be with us alas?  
Yet we rejoice, and thank thee for thy fate,  
Kiss thy small hands and feet, forget thy soul  
And let thy tender-hearted mother have  
The right to hold thee to the cup of love,  
Witting not thy detention from thy goal,  
To which thine elders struggle for above,  
Treating the infant as a glowing wave  
Upon the ocean of humanity,  
That here may break, and there may cease to be,  
Yet goeth on unto the hidden grave.

Yet, Child, be thou content, and do not mourn.  
Now are the gates all shut from whence thou came:  
Thou art incarcerate, and thou art born.  
Soon shall baptism chain thee with a name  
Which henceforth we will use to call thee ours;  
And ere long, thy soul glowing as a flame,  
Held as a chalice of the petaled flowers

## TO A CHILD

Within the body's ashes, shall creep forth  
And once again resume an entity.  
Thou shalt be decked in white flesh, as the north  
In snows of winter holds the burning Pole;  
And if thou dream, thy dreams shall not be more  
Than man's slight vagrant yearning for the soul.  
Thou shalt assume a mind to comfort thee,  
And a torn heart to lie thy ways before—  
Lest thy now lost existence fret thy clay,  
This heart of thine shall then be given pain,  
Thine eyes be given sight of night and day,  
Thy vagrant mouth a speech most frail and fain,  
And prayers and tears and sighs shall guard thee  
round,

As thou shalt yield thee to the earth's employ,  
Faint passion shall have voice and touch and sound;  
And if thou lend thine ear to antique joy—  
Which is the aureole above man's wound—  
Thou shalt be glad, in thy small human round,  
Force me not more than this, to vouch to thee;  
For speaking of thyself, I tell thee all  
Which may have import to thy life's decree.  
Not one least sunbeam shall about thee fall  
Unwittingly, nor rain-drop seek the sea—  
Not one germ grow without thy knowledge, nor  
One seed without thee blossom to its pall.  
All wisdom of the earth is thine; therefore  
O happy little child be glad and free.  
The ends of life are secret to us all:  
Beside its will all else is fugitive.  
But being so, can be discerned and seen  
All the great summer stumbling into green—  
The winter seasons in whose shell we live—

## TO A CHILD

Promising spring's and autumn's echoing blight—  
Darkness, dew-time, and light.

O tender one, not ready yet to climb  
The ways of chance, scarcely so strong to creep,  
Whose grown soul holds the excess of time.  
Life's consequence in death and greater sleep  
Flaunt all the angels with their clumsy wings.  
Take for thy rattle, earth and all its bells:  
Chew on the world, and for thy rubber rings  
Have thou the endless heavens and their hells!  
Take for thy playfellow a piece of space;  
And let man, as thy elder brother, run  
Playing for thee his game of tag and race,  
With thy rebounding ball, which is the sun!

## ODE TO YOUTH

THIS is my song: I lay it at thy feet,  
O thou so opulent in trust, O youth—  
So opulent in strength and will!  
As a cub-lion, nurtured in the spring  
On spiritual lilies, whose gold cup  
Was strangely given—sweet,  
As Mary Mother, her most heavenly child.  
This blessed flesh and blood for some such thing,  
As beast of forest, earth and braken-Nature wild,  
To feed upon and still be undefiled.

How loud a tone will pierce the heaven's assault,  
Or cleave above the shrill bird on his wing?  
Thus would I move  
The pale lips of my voice to cry of thee,  
Louder than some harmonious bassoon,  
Or broken water falling passionately  
From mountain gorges to the crushèd ground,  
Or sky-ascending rocket to the vault;  
Since life, of thee, has every need to sing  
The early burden of her tender love;  
Meanwhile, a pauper, barter I the sound  
'Twixt Sun and Heaven's will and the desirous Moon.

Yet still how lowly in my song am I  
Who can no more than stir perturbéd calms  
To multitudinous shallows  
Of sounds, that echo through acoustic spheres;

## ODE TO YOUTH

Or, touching here and there a freshened note  
In thin small music, make thee aware  
Of my poor pleadings for thy blessed alms.

Yet it is much, if I could speak of thee!  
Oh, how like a pine forest is thy hair!  
Thy hapless eyes  
Happy in their imprintment of thy dreams;  
Thy brow the whitened beach for thought's loose tide;  
Thy cheeks a moor of berries, brown and red  
Blent to their juices, for thy veins' disguise;  
Thy lips like sunset.

O youth, how could a mortal voice be found,  
Communicant with heaven's highest aim  
Of beauty binding art,  
To mark for thee the paths which are thine own,  
To clasp thy hand, to look upon thy face,  
And for thy childhood's custom let thee go;  
Where standing on a luminous mountain place  
Life shall be seen by thee, self-willed alone,  
Where unto thee, the thunders shall acclaim  
Their lordly noise of being, and the Hound,  
The howler of the stars, be heard below;  
For thou art elemental and apart.

Yet on earth's ocean wilt thou find thy peace;  
The blue entanglement of space and tone  
Will girt thy soul,  
That wandering forth into the Stygian years  
Belted the lands around their slender waist  
To guide the present's heave upon its shore.  
For it is kin to thee, and part thine own;

## ODE TO YOUTH

And ere its mutability shall cease  
Famine shall be conquered, chaos and tears.  
There, since by wonder all shall be defaced,  
The primal earth at last shall rise from war,  
While the sun spheres her bosom, pole to pole.

But I know well the metamorphosis  
That thou must, day by day, play on perforce.  
Therefore my song may cheer  
Thine ageless soul with comfortable truth;  
For when thou art appareled in thy joy  
My heart leans lowly to thee in remorse,  
Although I worship also with alloy.  
My arm would pillow thy dear head asleep,  
My thought would cover thy dissembled bliss.  
Thy tortuous vigil I would pass forsooth,  
And light thy tapers for thee all the year,  
And kneel at sacramental shrines and weep.

None shall forget who once have seen thee pass;  
For, thy remembrance cannot swiftly die,  
Nor thy face fade,  
Which like a vernal offering of the May  
Is hung with bloom; while from the season's sun  
Shall slowly grow thy fruitage of July.  
Therefore with trophies let me trim thy praise,  
If praise were well from me to thee, alas,  
Whose harvest shall be sooner reaped and done.  
I sun myself within thee unafraid  
To crown thee with the olive and the bays  
And the rich wisdom of thine elder days!



## TRUTH

WHY look thou? Thou hast come while I had  
thought  
Thou never could be born from mothers' wombs,  
By which our tenements of clay are wrought  
For voyaging our souls across the glooms,  
From women-burdened births to earth-enburdened  
tombs?

All of us come with fragrant hearts franchise:  
Therefore are we expected like the spring—  
Prepared our welcome in our mothers' eyes.  
Gayly should every soul arise and sing,  
For welcome done at its frail harboring!

Yet blind and lonely, gazing on the sun,  
Most of us hunger now for life's largess,  
Until our latest revelry be done.  
Then backward gaze we, while our wills confess  
There was no joy nor pain to aid or bless.

So through the dark we traverse and are bound  
To visionary hope, self-willed for cheer  
Lying beyond our veil of sight and sound,  
Whose dimness reaches gravely round the year,  
And spreads above the night's revolving sphere.



## TRUTH

For all about us is our ghostly dread,  
Our superstitious wisdom of the past,  
In which engulfed, we cannot look ahead;  
For we into its armored shape have cast  
Ourselves—our bodies and our minds at last.

O, thou great soul, behold our afternoon!  
We signed our seizure at the midday feast:  
Now will come night to darkly chain us soon:  
Then will at last dawn light, a lonely priest  
To gaze upon a desert in the east.

Were thy birth now, Time would himself have  
    death,  
And truthless earth lie fainting at thy feet;  
For the awakening of thy sad soft breath  
Which with its tone of heaven, would sadly greet  
A world where fraud and falsehood have their seat.

Yet wilt thou come, and round thy crownless  
    head  
I see no aureole or diadem—  
No change in Nature by the passage bred.  
No leaning angels stoop to kiss thy hem,  
Nor any flower falter on its stem.

Because thou art, the earth and air abide  
Within their rampant beings, still the same.  
The pallid moons across the sunsets ride;  
And no bird falters, crying loud thy name:  
Still thou hast not undone the doubt nor shame.

## TRUTH

And yet thy very promise would fulfil  
A springtime of ripe heaven, rich and full—  
Would tint horizons like the daffodil—  
Unto the sluggard currents brown and dull,  
Bring joy of rains to melodize and lull.

Thy shade upon the shadow of the world  
Should tinge each tingling vision into form,  
With so much radiance of light upheld  
As makes the light in cheerless fanes grow warm,  
And purples in the brooding of a storm.

Preceding years, which revelations told  
By thy white hand, pointing to thy self-birth,  
Show all the heavens formed in thy noble mold,  
And show the clusters of sidereal dearth  
All builded in thy beauty beyond earth.

Stern wills pervade thy atmospheric soul,  
Which on our wills all exultations throw  
As the reflections of our ardent goal.  
Thy impulse for descent we strangely know,  
Caught in the web of clouds that round us flow.

Therefore but lean with charitable touch  
Thy heart to ours, and we shall waking keep  
Thee all revealed to outlived splendor, such  
As falls upon us in our dreamful sleep—  
Truth!—while the waves of life about us sweep!

## THOU STANDEST NOT

WITHIN my garden blooms life's tree:  
Thou standest not beside my door,

Where oft in fond expectancy  
We stood together there of yore.

The ripe fruit offers of its store  
To my full lips' sufficiency:

Thou standest not beside my door,  
Nor is the bloom miraged in me.

The wind-touched leaves sing like a sea:  
On the bowed branch the sun rays pour:

The summer from the spring shall be  
More ripe with joy's increasing store.

And all the earth which grieved before  
Shall know of earth's regality.

Thou standest not beside my door,  
But as thou art in memory.

On further moor and vaguer lea,  
On ocean's far-affusing shore,

Where bound waves call their anarchy  
With glistening seaweeds dank at core,

On hills to dim horizons swore,  
No gladder life is to be free.

Thou standest not beside my door,  
And winter withers my life's tree.

## THE WHITE FLOWER

I CAME within a garden desolate,  
And there I saw a white bloom swept by wind.  
It trembled into birth all unperceived,  
After the snow had passed to make the June.  
It was the afterthought of summer's flush,  
A yearning for the past, and tears it held.  
And yet it grew as tender as the rose.  
The tomb had cast a shadow on its heart,  
The paleness of the moon was in its veins.  
The long blue finger-shadows of the eves  
Entwined its petals—soft as udder-dripped  
White milk, that when the sunset has decreased,  
Or which in the deep hours of the early dawn  
Is made libation with to humankind,  
When man doth bring the cattle from the field  
Of pasturage. Diaphanous the flower—  
Almost a nothing—yet in that Divine!

## POPPIES AFTER ROSES

HEART of my heart, I am free to thee, heart,  
Long since I spilt desires with the rose,  
And slept my sleep in poppies that depart  
With opiate repose,  
Heart of my Heart!

I am free to thee now; come in, I welcome thee:  
The sun took all my fire in his cup:  
My tears were tangled with the evening sea:  
Now they are drunken up:  
I can forget and be.

Winds have my will, O sad girl beautiful!  
Springs have my pulses where their freshets run.  
My wings are in a body cocooned, dull;  
And as the butterfly's wait for the sun,  
Heart of my Heart!

Come through the waste whereon the eagle flies,  
And we will watch him as he soareth far.  
Within his nest the restless seagull lies;  
Within his placement now is every star:  
Come back, be wise!

## POPPIES AFTER ROSES

Come back, O wonder of the lands and seas,  
With hair that breathes the perfume of the moon,  
Or seems a wafting swarm of gold-backed bees,  
With lips half-parted as horizoned noon,  
And shoulders white as warm snow ecstasies.

Come home, and lift and drift me to mine own.  
For like the earth-forgotten hearts that beat  
Salient and strangely in their undertone,  
Sweeter than when I sought for so much sweet,  
I lie upon thy bosom nor make moan.

## WEARY FEET

Lo, Love, to bathe for thee thy tired, tired feet.  
I heard a low voice calling, "Awake, arise and be!"  
Then ere I could the water in the sky's bowl pour  
    sweet,  
My lonely eyes were opened—and I could see.

But still I sang as ever of thy tired, tired feet:  
I long no brow of marble, no cheek of blood to feel—  
No eyes to mine sequestered as these I still may meet,  
For I have come with balsam to bathe thy tired feet.

Thy tired, tired feet—what more can seem more real?  
Low round the far creation there fall the hearts that  
    beat.  
But I, but I remember not, for I must fill my bowl—  
I wondered what to fill it from and then I found  
    control—  
To bathe thy tired feet.

The air is soft as linen, the rose it fain would dry  
When round about its petals, the morning dew falls  
    nigh.  
To make a softer linen, with sun my tears I try,  
And weave them for thy feet—  
Thy tired, tired feet.



## NIRVANA

### A BALLADE

NIRVANA liveth in the thing that dies.  
Sleep is laden full of life's desires,  
And only earth goes desolate and hires  
Her live emotions from the silent skies.  
I read the future in the present's eyes:  
Not there the halls of great Nirvana are,  
But in the sunken past alone she lies:  
She was the dust which fell from yester's star!

My heart no more for full cessation cries;  
I find her in the dead breaths of my sires.  
The future is loud-voiced and ever wise  
She sings her psalms, upon full-stringéd lyres.  
I see the light that falls from ancient spires:  
My soul there rests, no life is there to mar  
The wondrous calm that lucid naught inspires.  
She was the dust that fell from yester's star!

Across the Styx to life, Death's oarsman plies.  
The regal heaven, she herself attires  
In sound and beauty all which harmonize;  
And into life forgetless, sleep aspires.  
But in the present still the past expires:  
There is the grave which knows not heaven's bar.  
Nirvana is the breath of ashen fires:  
She is the dust which fell from yester's star!



# NIRVANA

## ENVOY

No life in Babylon and Thebes suspires:  
They leave upon the earth no stain or scar.  
The regal heaven herself, in life attires:  
Nirvana is the dust from yester's star.

## GRIEG: IN MEMORIAM

TO-NIGHT the violins around the world  
Played on by hands that seek to find joy-keys,  
Are touched with sadness down the four long strings.  
Known or unknown, there comes the wail of wings:  
The resting bows unrosined send a plea:  
Silent they lie as if by music held.  
A funeral dirge is telling mournful things:  
Through all the silver horns run murmurings,  
The North Sea to the North Sun sorrowing sings,  
With wild complainings and with heartbreak swelled,  
And Odin still and cold cons immortalities—  
For Grieg is dead.

It is no matter now Concertos lie  
On music stand or closed in cabinets:  
The notes are weeping through the clarionets  
Of those Archangels who can never die.  
The eyes that read Norway's folk-songs are wet;  
The voices tuned to plaints grow husked and dry;  
And from each music lover's breast a sigh  
Proclaims that even breath cannot forget  
One loved the lyric song who has passed by—  
For Grieg is dead.

King Haakon in his palace hears a wind;  
Charles Ninth receives one of his ancient breed,  
King of the Song of Battle and of Seed,

## IN MEMORIAM

Round which the cradle of the North Seas tind.  
To every honest cottaged woman, blind,  
Doth come the waiting song, wherewith did bleed  
The breast of her who sang Peer Gynt's soul-rest—  
Of Ibsen's plaint deep harbored in his breast,  
The words the searching melody did find—  
For Grieg is dead.

Weep, golden sun, whose gold makes constant day;  
Weep, midnight sun, thine own sidereal child.  
Sprinkle thy light where ashes are defiled  
And laid for an immortal son away.  
Forests, put on your robes of funeral gray  
And let the storm winds on the coast grow mild.  
Let mariners a sound hear through the dark,  
More piercing sad than Tristan's loud dismay,  
For Wagner's brother passes! And ye hark,  
Since nature now has only surf and lark—  
For Grieg is dead.

O purple hills of Norway, thunder keep:  
O statesmen of a growing Nation, weep!  
Hold watch beside the tower and palace wall,  
For from the Norse gods lightning begins to fall.  
Now grief and glory give to earth new fire;  
But while the bugle dies in hut and hall,  
No more the proclamation of the lyre!  
Revenge and joy are choked upon the pall:  
No voice victorious calls where men aspire,  
And battle's tongue is mute within her ire.  
There is no heart that cries with heart of all,  
For Grieg is dead.





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